2: Caroe S-4 (no date) 1953 RL1 Soviet Central Asia RL1

Russians who forced it on urban Muslim populations. Something in this matter may be learned from the political and educative part played by women who have become public figures in Kemalist Turkey.

Thus the impression we receive of the spiritual impact of Islam on the Turks of Central Asia owes nothing to the rigidity of doctrine. Clericalism those in the true line abhor. Yet here is an intimate sense of a real inspiration, owing much to the life of the tent and something to the pantheistic worship of Shamanist ancestors on the beautiful uplands of Central Asia, but infused with the mysticism of such men as the saint Ahmed of the XIIth century, whose tomb at Yese on the lower Sir Darya was once a great centre of pilgrimage. Ahmed himself stands in the line of Turkish mystics leading to Yunus Emre of Anatolia two centuries later. No amount of indoctrination in materialism will exorcise from the hearts of men and women a spirit which far transcends any doctrine.

There is a Western Turkish poet who has expressed in a few simple words that clear and shining faith in God which is here claimed as the peculiar inheritance of the sons of the steppe. Such men may see a holy book or a great mosque at journey's end, but their daily worship is attuned to the roving life, to infinite horizons beneath the sun, and at night to a multitude of stars:

Ye read a book
And ask for the writer,
A glorious building have ye seen?
Ye seek for the builder.
Have the earth and skies then no master?
O man, think and understand!
Unto us all things prove
There is one God, the Great, the Almighty.[1]

Okursunuz bir Kitabî
Sahibini sorarsiniz
Gördünüz mü bir hosh yapî
Ustasinî ararsiniz.

Sahipsiz mi yerler, gökler?
Düşününce insan anlar!
Herşey bize ispat eder
Büyük, Kadir bir Allah var.

IBRAHIM ALAEDDIN